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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Extension Service  
Washington 25, D. C.

May 19, 1947

For administrative use only

TO ALL STATE EXTENSION DIRECTORS:

Subject: Current Farm Labor News - #14

An appropriation item for the conduct of the farm labor program after July 1 was added to the Second Deficiency Appropriation Act by the Senate Appropriations Committee. The Second Deficiency Act as passed by the House did not include funds for the farm labor program. Should the Senate pass the Second Deficiency Act as reported, it would go to the conferees of the two Houses for adjustment of differences. One of these would be the farm labor item. Reports of conferees must be accepted by both Houses of Congress, and signed by the President before becoming a law.

With this letter is a copy of the farm labor appropriation item as included in the Appropriations Committee report to the Senate. The most pertinent provisions of it are:

1. Appropriation of \$6,000,000 of new funds to carry on the program from July 1 to December 31, 1947 and for the liquidation period.
2. The carryover from previous appropriations continues to be available.
3. Not less than \$2,400,000 of the new funds is to be allocated to the states.

Copies of the new 1947 Farm Labor Information Program were mailed to you this week: 5 copies to each supervisor, two to each director and editor, and one to each farm labor information assistant, labor utilization and VFV supervisor. Copies also sent to farm editors and radio farm program directors. Additional copies are available on request.

With this letter is a copy of the Western States Harvest Labor Guide--Farm Jobs Along Western Highways. Shipment of 125,000 copies filling orders from seven states--Arizona to Washington--are being made from this office, for distribution through state and county extension and extension farm labor offices. It is a cooperative effort of the seven State Extension Farm Labor and the Federal Extension Farm Labor offices. Robert G. Fowler, Jr., who is piloting the program at the Berkeley, Calif., office, created the layout and wrote the copy. National distribution from here will include radio farm program directors, and agricultural editors. Newspaper mats to illustrate news stories about the guide and program are being mailed to the states.

Extension photographer Ed Hunton left Monday for a month of farm labor picture taking in south Atlantic states. He will work a week in Florida with Herman Welch on labor utilization activities and then spend a week with Director Spencer and staff members in special crop work, before moving north with C.W.E. Pittman to obtain migratory labor pictures from Florida to Virginia.



From his field trip in the middle west, R. W. Oberlin brought back a very interesting report on the timely procedure VFV Supervisor Srb is following in awarding Extension "Recognition Certificates" to high school pupils, principals and superintendents in Nebraska. With State Supervisor Snipes and Srb, Oberlin "sat in" at a presentation at Nebraska City. He was impressed with the character of the main talk given by Mr. Srb as well as with the policy of holding presentation of the recognition award for work done in 1946 until May 1947, just before the help of the youth is needed again. The certificate thus becomes a recruiting agent as well as a recognition award. A supply of the certificates is available to any state needing additional numbers. Requests should be channeled through the state publication distribution officer.

How a Former Hired Hand Looks at the Farm Labor Situation: Walt Zuger, Washington State farm labor supervisor, quotes John Vasichek, a dairy farmer who was a hired hand until a few years ago, like this: "The present labor situation is not bad. It used to be, but now I am pretty well fixed to handle my help....a small house and two nice apartments. I think maybe farm hands should be included in the social security program and in the old age pension plan. Right now farm help hasn't much protection against being laid off or against sickness or injury."

In North Carolina, some 5 weeks before harvest work starts, about 90 percent of the 6,000 migrants who will be employed in that state, already have been placed and allotted housing, C. W. E. Pittman reports. Arrangements for work and housing in areas 500 to 800 miles away from their homes or present places of employment have been made through joint efforts of employers, migrants and the Extension Service. Nearly all the gamble has been taken from this segment of the Atlantic coast movement. Workers will not have to race to work areas a week or so before they are needed in order to compete for employment and housing. They can remain in Florida until their present harvest jobs end and then move leisurely to North Carolina or perhaps enjoy several days rest before starting for the new job. Similar preharvest arrangements have been made in Virginia.

In Colorado an effort is being made to adjust schedules so part of the Mexican Nationals due to arrive in May will not come until June. This is the result of seasonal conditions and the number of domestic workers available for beginning the beet thinning season, State Supervisor Hamman reports in his May 2 news letter. Of 750 Mexican Nationals arriving on May 15, 122 were turned back because they could not be placed and the second train scheduled for May 17 probably will be delayed. Total estimated plantings of beets are falling short and the result is a reduction in the estimated need for imported workers by several hundred.

From Montana, State Supervisor Dusenberry reports: "Quite a number of workers are on the road traveling from place to place and apparently doing a lot of shopping for jobs. The workers still appear to be quite choosy, and demand specific type of work, pay and living conditions....Sugar beet workers from Texas and other surplus southern states are flowing into this state at rapid pace."

Yours very truly,

*Barnard Joy*

Barnard Joy, Acting  
Deputy Director of Extension  
Farm Labor Program

Enclosures

(Copy to State supervisors)

